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formances of each being succinctly reviewed, the whole furnishing a very handy, compact narrative of our political life. Some of the best parts of the book are those dealing with the philosophical relations between politics and natural conditions, as in the differences of view between the up-country and low-country in South Carolina (p. 108).

But Benton did not get the resolution of censure of Jackson expunged in one year (p. 157), it took him three years. Johnson could hardly be called "extravagant" in the use of the veto (p. 382) when we recall Cleveland's prodigality with that weapon.

COLYER MERIWETHER.

COMMUNICATIONS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW:

My dear Sir:

ON October 18, after reading Mr. J. H. Smith's criticism (in the October number of the REVIEW) of my book, *British Interests and Activities in Texas, 1838-1846*, I addressed to you a letter of protest. In your reply of October 27, you state that "the pages of the REVIEW are always open to writers of books who wish to reply to reviews of their volumes, provided they confine themselves, as you would be disposed to do, to questions of fact."

After considerable hesitation I have concluded to avail myself of this privilege, as I believe Mr. Smith's review should not pass without comment. My book is not an important one. It merely presents the lectures delivered at Johns Hopkins University, and is no doubt deficient in literary form. But Mr. Smith's review is important, if open-minded justice is still requisite to a fair review. As a preliminary to an examination of the review it should be stated that, to the best of my knowledge, Mr. Smith and I are the only students who have read and made transcripts from the manuscript material on Texas, in the British Public Record Office.

Mr. Smith writes that my book "contains numerous errors", and cites twenty-one such "simple cases". Two are absolute errors. Of the nineteen other alleged errors, not differentiated, and so stated as to appear of equal gravity and to reflect equally upon the author, three are instances of carelessness of statement; *e. g.*, Mr. Smith writes: "On page 61 the signing of the Anglo-Texan treaties is correctly stated to have taken place in 1840, but on page 93 this is placed among the events of 1842." It is true that on page 93, near the bottom, "signing" is inaccurately and carelessly used for ratification. In the sentence immediately preceding, however, ratification is used, and on pages 67, 72, 75, 76, 78, 85, 86, the narrative is plainly occupied with the preparations for ratification and the correct word is used, and on page 87 is the following: ". . . on June 28 those treaties were finally ratified. . . ." On

page 93 the word "signing" is regrettable, but a misunderstanding of fact is impossible, and the review is clearly misleading.

To sixteen of the twenty-one allegations of error I object. Six of them are really differences between Mr. Smith and myself as to the meaning of certain documents. They are differences of interpretation—neither errors nor contradictions. Most of these refer to documents in the British Public Record Office (known apparently only to Mr. Smith and myself) and obviously impossible to quote at length in illustration of my objection. But, fortunately, Mr. Smith catalogues one such "error", the bearing of which and the document will be well known to every student of American history. He says, "Page 13: 'at the time there was little question, save in extreme abolition circles, that the allegations of Calhoun [in his correspondence with Pakenham, touching British interference in Texas] had some foundation in fact'; but, as Calhoun merely asserted on that subject what Aberdeen had avowed, the foundation of his 'allegations' was beyond question (*Sen. Doc. No. 341*, 28 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 50, 65)." Everyone knows this document and is aware that Calhoun attributed certain objects and a certain plan to Great Britain, and offered Aberdeen's words to support his allegations. They also know that Aberdeen denied Calhoun's interpretation. Mr. Smith accepts the latter. Indeed, he outdoes Calhoun, who writes, in this document, that he "infers" from Aberdeen's avowal a certain line of diplomacy. Here, Mr. Smith catalogues as an "error" (and without explanation or qualification) what is really a difference of interpretation, and then cites in support of his accusation the very document which we interpret differently.

Another of Mr. Smith's cases of error, not a matter of interpretation, is the following: "Page 145: Aberdeen's note to Ashbel Smith 'disclaimed any intention of interfering in Texan affairs'; but the note added the qualification 'improperly', on which a world of meaning could hang." The charge here is of incorrect citation, and consequent wrong conclusion—a serious charge, and based wholly upon the correctness of Mr. Smith's own notes. I had felt reasonably confident of my own accuracy, but for convincing proof, wrote immediately to my copyist in London for another transcript of Aberdeen's note to Ashbel Smith of September 11, 1843. This transcript reached me on the 15th inst., and is exactly as I have given it on pages 144–145 of the book. The word "improperly" does *not* appear in the note. (Transcript certified by W. H. Powell, 1 Arkell's Villas, Washington Road, Worcester Park, Surrey, England, November 3, 1910.) Now, in fact, the word "improper", or "improperly", in this connection occurs once on it is each time in reference to communications from Ashbel Smith to Aberdeen or to Jones, not from Aberdeen to Ashbel Smith. It does *not* appear in the note from Aberdeen to Ashbel Smith.

The remaining nine alleged errors are misrepresentations. To illus-

trate: "Page 80: 'throughout his career at the Mexican capital Pakenham very accurately reflected the attitude of the government at home'; but on page 123 he is said to have decided to take no action on certain definite instructions." Mr. Smith implies here that I have used the word "reflected" to mean that Pakenham accurately reflected his instructions by carrying out those instructions, and then, that I contradict this generalization by citing a specific instance when he failed to do so. The *entire sentence* on page 80, following an analysis of Aberdeen's change of policy toward Mexico, differing from that of Palmerston, is, as follows: "The change of tone in British policy is indicated by the change of tone in Pakenham's reports, for throughout his career at the Mexican capital, Pakenham very accurately reflected the attitude of the government at home." I do not think many readers would misunderstand the kind of "reflection" intended, in a sentence where the word "reports" is thus used, or regard this as in contradiction to the statement made about Pakenham some forty pages later, on page 123.

Again, Mr. Smith writes, "Page 131: Houston 'argued most vigorously against Santa Anna's proposal for an armistice'; but the British chargé wrote at this time (April 14, 1843) that Houston considered an armistice 'indispensably necessary.' (F. O. Texas, VI.) What he objected to was the idea that the armistice should be followed with an acknowledgment of Mexican sovereignty." Here, Mr. Smith has merely written what I myself wrote of Santa Anna's offer, and yet conveys the impression that I did not know the facts. Three pages before the sentence, a portion of which is quoted by Mr. Smith, I state (p. 128) Santa Anna's armistice overture to be based on a plan of Texan "reannexation to Mexico on terms of local self-government and nominal Mexican sovereignty. Santa Anna commissioned Robinson to make overtures along these lines to the Texas government. . . ."

Again; "The author explains (p. 152) that Elliot's 'only comfort [on hearing that the United States had suggested annexation] lay in the non-committal attitude of Texas and the evident intention of Houston to postpone action'; but why did Elliot forget that (*e. g.*, p. 155) he believed Houston sincerely desired to prevent annexation?" It might be replied that, in any logically constructed work, Elliot, on page 152 (December, 1843), could not very well be accused of forgetting what is postulated of him on page 155 (January, 1844). The fact is, however, as I show, that Elliot's belief in Houston was established long before December, 1843, but that in his dismay at the United States' overture on annexation, he did, for a few weeks, distrust Houston's ability to hold Texas in check. I particularly try to show that Elliot *did forget*, but Mr. Smith's statement would indicate that *I* forgot, and was guilty of contradiction.

It is probably unnecessary to give further illustrations of the nature of the review though I could readily do so. Those I have already given, with such brevity as has seemed possible, should indicate my point.

Believing that I have confined myself to facts, and thanking you for space, I am,

Sincerely yours,

EPHRAIM DOUGLASS ADAMS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW:

My dear Sir:

I HAVE examined attentively and with sympathy Professor Adams's letter and think that a few simple remarks may clear up the issues. (1) In order to put the reader on his guard respecting certain matters too large to be discussed in the review of his book, it seemed necessary to suggest that all due care had not been used by the author; and the incorrect stating of a fact was an error and a pertinent consideration even though a correct statement of it could somewhere be found. (2) The author does not distinguish between Calhoun's "allegations" regarding British interference in Texas and Calhoun's declarations regarding the state of Tyler's mind on that subject. (3) According to my notes as well as his, the word "improperly" does not occur in the draft of Aberdeen's letter of September 11 to Smith; but such a qualification was a characteristic—indeed essential—feature of British assurances with regard to interfering in Texas, and a trained investigator who, as I had good reason to believe, examined the letter itself, reported the word. The concurrence of probability and testimony appeared fairly convincing. (4) At a certain date the policy of the British government was to work for peace between Mexico and Texas, but Pakenham when instructed to execute that policy declined to do so. Now did his disobedience or his report that he had disobeyed reflect "very accurately the attitude" represented by his instructions? (5) In February, 1843, Santa Anna proposed through Robinson that Texas accept substantial autonomy with nominal allegiance to Mexico. Against this plan Houston argued. In May Santa Anna proposed through Doyle a sort of armistice. This proposal was primarily due to Houston's earnest though indirect exertions, and obviously it was a mistake to say that he opposed it. (6) As early as February 15, 1843, Elliot became satisfied that Houston desired the permanent independence of Texas; and this belief, strongly reaffirmed in the very despatch (October 31, 1843, secret) in which he reported that the United States had made an annexation overture, was always—in view of Houston's great influence and great political skill—a reasonable ground of hope and comfort, however doubtful popular sentiment, until Houston yielded to pressure in the latter part of April or the first days of May, 1845. (7) As for the residuary complaint, misrepresentation, it would be impossible to prove a negative in the space you could be asked to give me, and the failure to establish an instance is a further reason for not attempting it. Nor is this quite all. Great pains were taken—possibly not with success in every case—to understand and correctly represent the passages cited;

under the circumstances any other aim would have been inconsistent not merely with honesty but with even a low grade of simple human intelligence; and if writing is so done that a paintaking reader misunderstands it, the fault can hardly be charged to him. There are sentences in the book to which I returned again and again in order to determine their precise meaning. (8) Of course Professor Adams's name and position show that his book represents after all a deal of earnest scholarly work. Possibly, as my review was overrunning its limit, I took it rather too much for granted that no proof of this was necessary. Here, and not in the points brought forward by him, there may perhaps be a ground for criticizing the critic.

Respectfully yours,

JUSTIN H. SMITH.